

(U) "Ask Zelda!": Enjoying (?) the Ride

FROM: "Zelda," Dispenser of Advice on Workplace Issues

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(U) The article below is unclassified in its entirety.



Dear Zelda,

I work in **OPS1**, and because of a bad knee, I enjoy riding up the escalators instead of taking the stairs. It's a big help to my knee pain. My problem is people who get on the escalator behind me, then make annoying noises when I don't start dashing up the escalator, and just enjoy the ride. Sometimes they push by me, rather rudely, and then quick step their way to the top. This annoys me. The steps are right there beside the escalator. If they want to rush up the steps, why don't they just do that? If they want to go even faster, why not the elevator? Am I wrong for wanting to stand there and let the escalator do its work? What's the official protocol for riding the OPS1 escalators?

Dear Easy Rider,

We Americans are in an unending quest for speed. An airplane that can cross a continent in hours was not fast enough -- they had to create the **SST**. A meal that took hours to cook when I was a child can now be microwaved in a matter of minutes; and yet people are *still* impatient when they have to wait to heat their lunch behind a co-worker warming a frozen Lean Cuisine. It seems the faster we go, the faster we want to go.

No, you are not wrong. Standing on the step while it moves to the next level is what escalators are meant for. While it is polite to stand to the right so people can pass, if it's a narrow escalator you are under no obligation to start dashing up it if someone behind you starts "tailgating" and/or making annoying noises.

Since I am not an official Escalator Protocol Officer (EPO), I will give you **Zelda's Rules for Riding the Escalator:**

1. Step onto the bottom step, single file.
2. Stand to the right and hold onto the rail (so you don't fall if it stops suddenly).
3. If you want to hasten your ascent, you may walk up the escalator by passing people on the left -- as long as there is room to do so without pushing them aside; otherwise, wait behind them until they reach the top and disembark.
4. If you want to walk up stairs, use the non-moving variety. It will be safer and provide space on the escalators for those who need it.*

Are you a speed demon quick-stepping your way to the top? Do you get impatient on the OPS1 escalators when an "Easy Rider" is in your way? Why not take that opportunity as a reminder to stop and smell the roses... or the cafeteria's pot roast? Slow down and enjoy the ride!

Zelda's

* Addendum for urbanites: If you take the metro/subway in a major city where the escalator is very long and slow and there are no regular stairs, you may modify these rules when you are in a hurry to make a connection. If you are on a full escalator and happen upon an individual who has not seen a copy of Zelda's Rules for Riding the Escalator and is standing on the left, blocking your ascent, you may politely ask her if she would mind moving to the right for a moment to let you by so you can make your connection. But be considerate: this may be a person who is slightly claustrophobic and is uncomfortable being underground on a packed escalator when she cannot see ahead of her. Be sure to thank her for accommodating your request.
